Overview:
This lesson plan will challenge participants to reflect on their own cultural heritage and connect with each other. They will write short poems where each line begins with “I am from,” which will allow them to describe their heritage using the details and memories most important to them.

Background and Information:

Objectives:
As a result of this activity, participants will be able to:
1. Reflect on specific details and feelings about life and memories.
2. Build new connections with their own cultural heritage.

Time:
30 minutes

Group Size:
Pairs

Materials:
Paper and pen/pencil

*Note*: This activity may best be facilitated by providing a template in a handout. Several templates are provided in the Links section of this tool.

Intercultural Development Continuum Stages:
- Denial
- Polarization
- Minimization

AAC&U Intercultural Knowledge and Competence Goals:

Cultural Self-Awareness:
- To articulate insights into own cultural rules and biases (e.g., seeking complexity; aware of how their experiences have shaped these rules, and how to recognize and respond to cultural biases, resulting in a shift in self-description).

Other Skills:
Friendship
Activity Instructions & Links:

• The Kentucky’s “Where I’m From”: A Poetry of Place asks participants to first read or listen to George Ella Lyon read her “Where I’m From” poem and then to discuss what they notice about the poem (the style, the content, etc.). Then, they construct their own versions.

• There are several templates of this type of poem available online:
  o A detailed template on sausd.us.
  o A template from freeology.com

• There are several websites that provide examples of “I Am From” poems:
  o A collection of “Where I’m From” poems from 7th-12th grade students
  o A crowdsourced “Where I’m From” poem from NPR’s Morning Edition

Related Tools:

Tools to use before this lesson:

• Name Story, aka The Name Game
• Voices from the Past (Name Tags)

Tools to use next:

• What Do They Bring?

Similar tools:

• Circles of My Multicultural Self
• Five Minute Poem, The
• I Am Poems
• Identity Beads
• The Line Exercise
• The Paseo (Circles of Identity)
• Who Am I? Echoes of Culture
• Who Am I? Identity Dialogue